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PRONOUNCED AT

B O S T O N

BEFORE THE

COLONIZATION SOCIETY

OF

MASSACHUSETTS,

ON THE

ANNIVERSARY OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE,

JULY 4, 1833.

BY CALEB CUSHING.

B O S T O N :

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At a Meeting of the Board of Managers of the **Massachusetts Colonization Society**, July 4, 1833, His Honor Lieut. Gov. **ARMSTRONG** in the Chair, it was

RESOLVED, That the thanks of the Board be presented to **MR. CUSHING** for his able and appropriate Address this day, and that a copy thereof be requested for the press.

J. V. C. SMITH,

Sec. Mass. Society.

Garrett A. Smith

Secretary

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University Place

Rev. C. C. Smith

ORATION.

LIBERTY,—liberty of thought, liberty of speech, liberty of action,—liberty in government, liberty in person,—is the master-principle, the predominant idea, the great first motive passion, which, in all times, but most of all in our own, has impelled and agitated the world. Whether in savage or civilized existence, it is alike the cherished desire of the human heart, the potent spring of human life.

Chasing his prey in the pathless depths of his western wilderness. over savannahs or through forests coeval with creation,—although science, and art, and religion, and whatever else refines and blesses humanity, be unknown to him,—yet man feels that he is free,—free as the luxuriant vegetation, which springs up spontaneously around him from a virgin earth unbroken by the plough,—free as the untamed courser, who divides with him the empire of the desert. It is the one overswaying sentiment, which God implanted in his breast: it inspires him with untutored eloquence in council, it nerves his arm in battle.—Tear him from his native solitudes, and place him in the midst of all that civilization can gather together of splendid, alluring, or wonderful, and he pines to exchange the luxuries of Art for the congenial freedom of Nature.

Nor is the inextinguishable love of liberty less characteristic of man as a cultivated and intellectual being, as a constituent part of

the complex fabric of political society, to which we belong. To retain it when possessed, to recover it when lost, has been the object of those mighty efforts of the human race, which have rescued from oblivion, one after the other, successive ages in history, and held up the actors in them to the admiration of posterity.—They are epochs familiar to the memory, they are men whose image is ever present to the mind; and whether they honored the mountains of Greece or Switzerland, the plains of Poland or Lombardy, why should I pause to recount them, when here, amid the scenes of our fathers' sacrifices and our fathers' glory, and on this day, the anniversary of our national independence, we ourselves are assembled in the name and in the holy cause of Liberty?

It is, I repeat, in her name and in her cause, that we have assembled, and fitly, therefore, upon this proud anniversary, since the day of our emancipation from bondage as a people should be consecrated to the one high principle, which singles it out from its undistinguished fellows in the lapse of time,—the conservation of the genuine theory of universal justice,—the spreading abroad of the great truth that all men are born to equal participation in the blessings of life,—the rights and the wrongs of the slave, wherever he may be and of whatever clime or complexion,—the cause, in a word, of constitutional Liberty.

We, indeed, in the land of the pilgrim fathers, the chosen refuge of the oppressed, inhale the pure atmosphere of freedom; we imbue its doctrines with the very being we draw from the maternal breast; they come to be the first elements of our moral constitution in manhood; and for us, it is only the abuses of liberty from within, that we have room to apprehend in our New England.—And would to Heaven that it were so in our whole country; that the curse of involuntary servitude did not still cling to so large a portion of our countrymen, destroying their peace, filling their dwellings with the agonies of perpetual domestic suspicion, subjecting their families to massacre, and hanging its dead weight upon their public welfare; that the chains of the Negro were at length and forever struck from his limbs; that Liberty, Knowledge, and Christianity, were made equally the unpurchased birthright of the European and the African, throughout the New World!

Glorious, in truth, and auspicious will be the day,—glorious for our country, auspicious for the human race.—when man shall cease to be the bond slave of man. It matters not what name of sect we of New England may bear,—in what form of association, what combination of party, we may be ranked,—on this point we are of universal accord ; and we are so,—not merely from that intimate conviction, that prejudice of education, if you will, which has grown with our growth,—but on considerations of eternal truth, of justice, of humanity, of religion, of expediency,—of everything which should inform the heart and control the actions of a rational and accountable man,—of a patriot, a philosopher, and a Christian.

We maintain, and the letter of our Constitution is to us a truth, that men are born to equal political rights, however the accidents of fortune may interpose to prevent the enjoyment of those rights ; and that personal servitude, therefore, is contrary to the fundamental principles of political justice.

We believe that, although the Bible inculcates legal obedience of the subject to the ruler, and of the servant to the master, yet political equality, civil freedom and personal freedom, and of course the doctrines of emancipation, are among the peculiar and characteristic lessons of the religion of Jesus Christ.

We know that, however the interest of the master may consult the physical well-being of the slaves in whom his wealth consists, yet that for them the moral benefits of life are imperfectly, when at all, enjoyed. They are not educated, lest through education they should learn to appreciate the value of that liberty which they have not, and should acquire the temper, the will, and the means to escape from their involuntary thralldom. That exquisite sentiment, which ennobles and sanctifies the relation of the sexes, is not theirs ; for how shall the ties of domestic life, when subject to the caprice, and dependant on the interests and improvidence of a master, possess the highest and holiest of sanctions ? The pursuit of riches, rank, or distinction,—the desire of public usefulness,—the sense of conscious capability to augment the sum of human knowledge, virtue, and happiness, and the will to exert that capability for noble ends,—the divine unction of religious ardor and apostolic zeal,—the noble passion of disinterested well-doing for the

good of our fellows,—ambition of power or fame,—in short, all the strong moral inducements of human action, be they for time or be they for eternity, belong to man as the agent of his own volition : they are the magnificent heritage of the free. We are the creatures of motive, and it is the influence of circumstance upon the springs of action within us, which gives to the soul its energy, and to existence all its beauty and worth. I know it is the ordinary common-place of rhetoric and poetry to dwell on this fact ; but it is not the less a truth for its triteness ; and while it has been true of slavery under all its modifications, it is more especially true of slavery as it is here, where the color of the slave creates a visible and permanent distinction between him and his master, and prevents the enslaved race from being gradually absorbed in, and assimilated with, the mass of the free population.

We are deeply sensible of the pernicious influence of slavery upon the condition of that portion of our country where it exists, and the character of its free inhabitants. We see that it tends to weaken the spirit of enterprise, and to banish industry by rendering labor disreputable ; that it corrupts the morals by promoting idleness and affording facilities for vicious indulgence ; and that, striking as these evils are, they are poorly compensated by the livelier sense of the value of freedom and higher tone of honor, which may prevail in a slave-holding community. We see, among the States of the Union, some, which nature has most bounteously favored, comparatively impoverished by the system of slave labor,—rendered tributary to the industrious population of the free States, or of foreign countries, for all the comforts and conveniences of life,—unblessed by the signs of universal competency, happiness, and welfare, the commodious habitations, the thrifty and well ordered farms, the flourishing manufactories, the ships, the churches, the schools, which are the result and the honor of free labor in the Eastern and Middle States ;—we see all this, the retribution which slavery works out upon itself, we see that monstrous disloyalty towards the Union, in certain regions of the South, of which, whatever may be the pretexts, this undoubtedly is not the least fruitful source ; and in these considerations, even if the right of the slave did not cry to heaven for his ransom, we should find incentives enough to

plead, and labor, and pray for the purification of this plague-spot from our land, for the end of this great drawback in the palmy prosperity of the Union.

If any sentiments, differing from these, have obtained among us, it is unknown to me:—I avow these to be the sentiments which I entertain, I believe them to have universal currency, throughout New England. Standing here, on this occasion, by the invitation of the Colonization Society of Massachusetts, to advocate its cause and justify its purposes, and aware of the extraordinary violence of language employed in certain quarters to impugn the motives and abstract doctrine of prominent members and friends of that Society, I have felt bound to put on record, in the outset, a distinct declaration of creed on this point, at the risk of seeming to argue that, which none disputes, and of illustrating positions too plain to admit of denial;—and I have done this, not so much in respect of my own opinion, as in justice to the good name of the Society.

For the true questions to be considered are,—What is the object of the Colonization Society? Is that object laudable? Is it pursued by honorable means? The private motives or personal opinions of any individual who embarks in the cause, whether they be good, or bad, or indifferent, these are a matter concerning him alone, his conscience, or his reputation,—and for which the Society is no wise responsible.

What, then, is the object of the Colonization Society? Is it laudable? Is it honorably pursued?

This object is simple, direct, visible; there is no concealment of real design, there is no profession of a simulated one:—it is to establish colonies on the western coast of Africa, by means of such free colored persons or emancipated slaves in the United States, as may voluntarily emigrate under the auspices of the Society.

Whether this object be a laudable one, depends upon the consideration of two facts, namely, the operation of the Society in the United States and its operation in Africa.

Within the United States, the friends of the Colonization Society conscientiously believe that the association is a useful instrument of beneficence, indirectly to the whites, but more directly to the blacks themselves, whether enslaved or free.

And, first, as to the enslaved blacks. It is perfectly well understood that, in the slave-holding States, many obstacles, arising from the tenor of the laws respecting free negroes, stand in the way of emancipating slaves, and deter the master from doing this, where otherwise his convictions of duty would outweigh the consideration of his personal interest. The Colonization Society presents to such persons a ready method of accomplishing their benevolent purpose. It has actually conveyed to Africa nearly one thousand manumitted slaves, and needs only augmented means to extend its usefulness in this respect. Here is a definite, practical good, beyond the reach, it would seem, of controversy or cavil, and sufficient, of itself alone, to entitle the Society to unqualified commendation. The Society is also of manifest utility in respect of enslaved blacks, because, in addition to its direct agency in conveying them to Africa when emancipated, it tends to promote and encourage the spirit of emancipation, and, by the information it diffuses, the discussion it elicits, the cultivated and influential individuals in the South, who engage in its cause, gradually to bring to a right conclusion the minds of the slave-holders themselves, through whom alone the abolition of the system of slavery can be peacefully accomplished. Here, also, is definite, practical good. I am aware that much has been urged as to the incapacity of the Society to transport to Africa all the slave population of the United States, and comparisons are instituted between the periodical increase of the slaves in a given time, and the number of slaves thus far colonized under the auspices of the Society. Whether this conclusion be sustained by the premises alleged in its support, I do not now stop to inquire ; it does not, in any event, constitute a sound objection to the Colonization Society, inasmuch as, be the good, which it is capable of accomplishing in this respect, great, or be it small, here is, I repeat, at any rate a good, a definite practical good, actually accomplished by the Society, and a wide field of future usefulness opened to it in the slave-holding States.

Secondly, as to the free blacks. It is impossible to deny that the free blacks in the United States labor under disadvantages arising from color, which no system of laws, however just and equal, —no plans of benevolence, however comprehensive,—can remove.

God forbid that I should speak of this as matter of reproach : I refer to it only as an existing fact, which it would be idle and absurd to keep out of sight, in discussing the means of serving the colored population of the United States. Nor does it need that I should enter into the details or extent of the fact ; since it is enough to be aware of its existence. I do not mean to say that the possession of high intellectual and moral qualities by a colored person would not be duly honored among us ; on the contrary, I believe it would be ; and, from a sentiment of compassion toward the race, more honored even than the same degree of merit in the dominant class. Still the fact remains that, whether in political or in social relations, full equality does not now exist between the races, and is not to be anticipated in any probable future contingency. Proceeding upon this incontestable fact, the Colonization Society says to the free colored inhabitants of the United States : ‘ We offer to you a secure asylum in a land congenial to your physical constitution, where you will be the dominant race,—where the avenues to wealth, distinction, and usefulness will be yours indisputably ; the land of your fathers ; that Africa from which you or your progenitors were forcibly severed, and whither you may return to be the missionaries of civilization and of religion ; we freely offer to you a participation in the advantages now enjoyed in Liberia by those of your color who have already emigrated ;—if you accept them, it is well ; if you prefer to remain here, the inferior class, it is well ;—it is not our benefit that we have primarily in view, but that of you and your race ; and in proposing to you what we conceive to be a valuable object, we have discharged some portion of that great debt to Africa, which we acknowledge to be due from Europeans and from their descendants in America.’ Such is the language, which the Colonization Society addresses to the free colored inhabitants of the country ; and I profess that I cannot see in it either cause of reproach on the part of colored persons, or ground of excited feelings, or least of all justification for the hostility of caste, which has been industriously propagated in certain quarters in consequence of the establishment and signal success of the Colonization Society.

Lastly, as to the whites. While the Colonization Society has not, either in the causes which originally induced its formation, or

in the management of its affairs, proposed any advantage to the whites as to the main object of its exertions, yet the friends of the Society perceive that it promotes harmonious action upon the subject of slavery in the different sections of the Union; and they look to it as the instrument of ultimate good to themselves, in so far as it may tend, by peaceable means, to produce the final abolition of the slave-system in the Southern States.

Within the United States, therefore, I hold it to be demonstrable, that the operation of the Colonization Society is beneficial to every class of its inhabitants; how much so, is not now the question, but at all events beneficial;—and I think it can be shown also to be beneficial in Africa.

There was a time when the utility of the Society, as respected Africa, was contingent, was matter of speculation; but it is so no longer. A flourishing colony of emigrant colored persons from the United States, having borne with them the means of education,—the civilization and the religion of the land they left,—now exists in Liberia, to utter its testimony in behalf of the Society, and to constitute the fulcrum, whereby, under the blessing of God, the natives of Africa may be raised to the condition of civilized men and of Christians. When I reflect upon the rapid growth of the Colony of Liberia, and call to mind the painful progress of the first colonies of Virginia and Massachusetts, out of which this great Republic has been permitted to spring, I feel that the prospect, which is thus opened to Africa, is brilliant enough to justify the most ardent enthusiasm in the cause of the Colonization Society. And familiar as this part of my subject may be to many of my hearers, I am unwilling to dismiss it without some brief remarks on the practicability and effects of civilizing the Africans.

In all ages, the Continent of Africa has constituted a great geographical problem, the debateable ground of science, the fruitful field of doubt, prejudice, and misapprehension. Once, opinion was, that its tropical regions were given up to the dominion of burning heat, intolerant of human life, impervious to the footsteps of conquest or commerce. The voyages of the early Portuguese navigators effectually dispelled this false idea, and displayed to us

a coast, obnoxious, of course, to the heats which prevail in other tropical regions of the globe, but thronged, at the same time, with a robust and vigorous native population, and as later experience has proved, no more deleterious to Europeans than similar latitudes of Asia and America. But the vast interior of the Continent still continued to be the region of mystery, pictured to the imagination as a wide, sandy desert, and known to us only by a few scattered particulars derived from the ancients, by the meagre and unsatisfactory accounts of Arabian geographers, by here and there a solitary fact gleaned from the Barbary traders and the slave-merchants of Nubia or Guinea. But what difficulties could withstand, what dangers could deter, the ardor of European thirst of knowledge, European cupidity of gain, European benevolence? One after another of the adventurous pioneers of improvement fell a victim to his zeal in the cause of knowledge and humanity; Park, Ledyard, Burckhardt, Clapperton, had imparted a melancholy fame to the history of African discovery; until at last, when the best organized attempts of public bodies had utterly failed of success, it was reserved for obscure individuals, a French mariner and an English domestic servant, to reveal the hidden secrets, the great navigable rivers, the rich soil, the exuberant vegetation, the numerous population, of the heart of Africa. And the discoveries of Caillié and Lander seem to have providentially chanced at that period of time, when the establishment of the American Colony of Liberia, the conquest of Algiers by France, the regeneration of Egypt under the auspices of Mohammed-Ali and the assured possession of Southern Africa by the English, conspire together at length to promise the redemption of this great Continent from the degradation of ages.

There yet remains one last, lingering prejudice regarding Africa, to be dispelled by the clear light of truth, to be rebuked by the irresistible voice of experience. Asia has run her long career of glory; Europe has plucked from her hand the torch of science, the sceptre of empire; three centuries have sufficed to render America the competitor of the Old World in the march of improvement; and wherefore shall not Africa thrust in her sickle to the harvest, wherefore not Africa stand up 'redeemed, regenerated, disenthralled,' under the vivifying influences of Christianity?

It is the common idea, I believe, that Europeans, by engaging in the slave-trade, are, in chief part, accountable for the barbarism of Africa; but detestable as that traffic has been and is, and heavy as the load of guilt is, which rests upon those who have pursued it, the slave trade is the effect, rather than the cause, of the moral abasement of Africa. There is a conquering race in the interior of the Continent, the Arabs, who, like other Mahometans, pursue the slave-trade as well in Africa as in Asia, and who, on both continents, serve to aggravate, rather than counteract, the debasing influences of paganism. Civilization, of Arabs and Africans alike, is the powerful engine by which the slave-trade is to be eradicated from the earth; and it is from the agency of Christians, or of them primarily, that any rational hope of the civilization of Africa can be derived. And who so proper to communicate the boon of Christianity, and of civilization along with it, to Western Africa, as men of African birth or extraction themselves, prepared for the noble undertaking by residence among the people of Christendom?

To deny that the civilization of Africa is practicable, is to forget all that history tells us of the greatness and glory of ancient Egypt, whither Herodotus, Pythagoras, and Plato, the fathers of Grecian learning and philosophy, repaired for intellectual improvement, as the Romans afterwards did to Athens; it is to forget the conquests of Sesostris; it is to forget the stupendous works of Art still remaining, and capable forever to remain, upon the banks of the Nile, indestructible monuments of the wealth and refinement of the Ethiopians and Egyptians, themselves, in the marked physical peculiarities which meet the eye at the present day, of the indigenous races of Africa.

One other question remains to be disposed of, and that is, whether the object of the Colonization Society, thus laudable in itself, has been pursued by honorable means?

And here let me premise that I conceive it to be matter of unspeakable regret, that the friends of another association, professing purposes of philanthropy akin to ours,—I mean the Anti-Slavery Society,—should have deemed it needful or proper to commence a deliberate and persevering warfare on the aims of the Colonization

Society. I feel that such hostility was not called for; I think it is unwarranted; and I perceive that it has already had most injurious effects,—not on the Colonization Society, for that has gained friends by discussion,—but on the *feelings* of colored persons in the free States, and their *condition* in the slave-holding States. Indeed, when I remember that the jealousies of the free blacks has been causelessly aroused by vehemently denouncing men among the best and purest in this Republic as conspirators against their rights, as embarked in a project of deliberate fraud on the nation, a diabolical scheme, a nefarious plan of deception,—for such is the language applied to this association,—I cannot but deplore the misapprehension of facts, delusion, or wickedness, which thus assails the objects and supporters of a public charity so generous in design as the Colonization Society. In regard of all such general imputations on the *motives* of the Society, it would neither become the dignity of this occasion, nor the calmness proper to the place, to remark at length; but there are points of difference between the two associations, which may well be considered here, as being reasonable subjects of discussion between men alike professing the pursuit of a praiseworthy end. For it is time the fact should be clearly understood, in the free States, and loudly proclaimed, that *Anti-Slavery* is not *Anti-Colonization*; the supposed necessary identity between opposition to slavery and opposition to African colonization is a radical error, which chiefly, as I have reason to believe, has misled conscientious individuals to withhold their countenance from the Colonization Society. Let me inquire then, for a moment, what we can do, and what we ought to do, in respect of the great question of slavery, as existing in the United States.

All, who have read the Constitution of the United States, know full well, that by the very fundamental conditions of the Union, Massachusetts and Virginia stand, relatively to the question of the slave-system, in the position of foreign States. We have precisely the same means of direct influence over that system in Virginia or South Carolina, as in Cuba, in Jamaica, in Brazil. It is not therefore, by legislation, that we in Massachusetts can effect the emancipation of the slaves in the Southern States, any

more than by positive legislation, we can relieve Ireland from subjection to England, or restore the independence of the Poles. Our means of direct influence in this matter are confined to persuasion, argument, exhortation, whether written or spoken, addressed either to the colored or the white inhabitants, the governors or the governed, of the slave-holding States.

By inflammatory publications clandestinely circulated among the slaves of Virginia or Carolina, we have the *faculty* of inciting them to insurrection:—in doing which, we commit an indictable crime, we wilfully violate our oaths of allegiance to the Constitution, we outrage the commands of God. If, acting thus in defiance of all divine and human laws, we succeed in producing an insurrection of the colored inhabitants,—a servile war,—we shall, to be sure, bring the question of abolition to a sharp and speedy crisis,—a crisis of massacre, of blood, of conflagration, ending, if thoroughly prosecuted, in nothing less than the extermination either of the slaves or of their masters. Whoever can coolly contemplate such an event, whoever can deliberately set about the production of it, is a portent in the shape of man:—whoever can look to it as a great purpose of benevolence and philanthropy, must have utterly lost the capacity of distinguishing between right and wrong, reason and error, truth and falsehood. Reasoning, as such a man must reason, to arrive at such a conclusion, the perpetrators of the massacre of Saint Bartholomew's justified the assassination of their huguenot brethren,—sacrificing, that is, all consideration of the quality of means in the pursuit of a proposed end, and yielding up the judgment, hoodwinked and fettered, to the dominion of a metaphysical subtlety. And in earnest reality, whilst the attempt to produce the abolition of slavery through the means of insurrection is manifest crime, the scheme itself would be madness and folly. Let a servile war be kindled, by whatever agency, in either of the slave-holding States, and at that instant the inhabitants of that State would be constitutionally entitled to the whole physical force of the Union, if need were, to effect its suppression; they would be constitutionally entitled to it, and they would have it; they would obtain it from the public authorities of the Union for the time being, if they were alive to

their honor and their duty; if they possessed a tithe of the firmness and patriotism exhibited by the present government in suppressing disloyalty among free inhabitants of the South; and if they did not obtain it from the public authorities of the Union, they would obtain it from the spontaneous sympathy of their fellow citizens in neighboring States. Of course, such an insurrection *must* fail, and would ultimately tend, as unsuccessful servile wars have generally tended, whether in ancient or modern times, to add ten-fold weight to the chains of the slave, while its immediate effect would be to induce a scene of desolation, of unavailing bloodshed, from which the imagination recoils with horror. I trust in heaven, for the honor of our country and our species, that no individual, of sane understanding, who deliberately desires and would promote a servile war in the Southern States, is to be found in Massachusetts.

But I will presume,—I feel bound in courtesy to presume,—that all, among us, view in a proper light the possibility of an insurrection in the South, and that, therefore, when men write or speak of the immediate abolition of the slave system, they *intend* to act upon the minds of the masters, not of the slaves. Taking this for granted, we are bound then, as rational men, in whatever schemes of benevolence we may agitate, to act with reference to existing facts, and to consider, not only what is just in itself, but what is practicable in operation and beneficial in its consequences. We, in the North, all desire the abolition of the slave-system; we are anxious to cooperate in effecting this, by our money, our advice, our personal aid. But what shall we do? What is the specific, definite act to be performed? English writers, who mean well, perhaps, but who are deplorably ignorant of the nature of our government, and of the feelings of our people, say to us,—Abolish slavery at once, by legislation.* This counsel may or may

* The degree of ignorance on this point, which prevails in England, may be judged from the tenor of a recent article on this country in the Edinburgh Review, the conductors of which cannot be accused of unfriendly spirit towards us, and whom certainly it is proper to rank among the most intelligent men in Great Britain. 'We do, therefore, hope,' the reviewer says, 'that the Congress will, while it is yet time, open their eyes to the danger with which the bondage of the blacks threatens the Union; and that **THEY** (that is Congress) will provide for their instruction and gradual emancipation.'—No. cxi, p. 478.

not be good ; but it presents, to us in New England, no visible aim, no tangible object, nothing which we have the physical power to execute. It would be just as reasonable to ask of Great Britain to abolish, by act of Parliament, the despotic authority of the Czar in Russia, or the Mahometan religion in Turkey, or the deadly scourge of the cholera-morbus, or any other of the great moral or physical evils, which afflict the posterity of Adam. What then, shall we do?—It returns to this:—We may influence the actions of our southern fellow-citizens through their reason, their fears, their conscience ; and thus only can we promote the abolition of slavery in Virginia or Carolina.

Here, then, is a great social duty to be discharged towards our fellow-men, namely, to **CONVINCE** the slave-holder that religion, justice, expediency, conspire to demand the abolition of personal servitude. Noble duty ! High and holy task ! Whose pen shall be idle, whose tongue shall be silent, when this glorious field of humanity invites the efforts of the philanthropist and the Christian ? But it is **CONVICTION**, that we are to produce, in the minds of rational men, who alone have the power to act ; and let us proceed to the task as rational men ourselves, by such methods as may afford some prospect of success, not by such as will be sure to occasion total failure. Our southern fellow-citizens, we may suppose, either deny the practicability of abolition, or they deny that it is for their interest, or they deny that conscience and public duty require them to sacrifice their interest for the benefit of their slave population :—what are the arguments, by which we may hope to change their positive opinion upon these points ?

To solve this problem, to find the answer to this question, we must examine the rights of the South, and the feelings of the South.

First, as to the rights of the South. By the Constitution, theirs alone is the power to act in this matter :—of it, we have no legal jurisdiction. To legislate, in Congress, upon the slaves of Virginia, is to dissolve the Union. I am free to say that, for myself, and on this point, I feel glad, in my humble sphere, to follow the lead of the great lights of the land. Of the condition of compromise respecting slavery, by which alone the South and the North

are bound together in Union, I am ready to maintain with Joseph Story, that 'He, who wishes well to his country, will adhere steadily to it, as a fundamental policy, which extinguishes some of the most mischievous sources of all political divisions,—those founded on geographical position and domestic institutions.'—I am content to echo the declaration of Daniel Webster, when he said, of the same provisions of the Constitution :—'It is the original bargain, the compact ; let it stand, let the advantage of it be fully enjoyed ; the Union itself is too full of benefits to be hazarded in propositions for changing its original basis :—*I go for the Constitution as it is, and the Union as it is.** On a question of constitution, I repeat, whether Webster and Story lead, who need scruple to follow?—True, we may say to the South : 'Our fathers, the sages of the Revolution, made an improvident bargain, when those of them, who represented the Northern Colonies, stipulated never to interfere by legislation in the political

* 'Viewed in its proper light, as a real compromise, in a case of conflicting interests, for the common good, the provision is entitled to great praise for its moderation, its aim at practical utility, and its tendency to satisfy the people, that the Union, framed by all, ought to be dear to all, by the privileges it confers, as well as the blessings it secures.—It had a material influence in reconciling the Southern States to other provisions in the Constitution, and especially to the power of making commercial regulations by a mere majority, which was thought peculiarly to favor the Northern States. It has sometimes been complained of, as a grievance ; but he, who wishes well to his country, will adhere steadily to it, as a fundamental policy, which extinguishes some of the most mischievous sources of all political divisions,—those founded on geographical position, and domestic institutions. It did not, however, pass the Convention without objection. Upon its first introduction, it was supported by the votes of nine States against two. In subsequent stages of the discussion, it met with some opposition ; and in one of the State Conventions it was strenuously resisted. The wish of every patriot ought now to be, *requiescat in pace.*'—STORY'S COMMENTARIES, Vol. ii, p. 113.

'There is not, and never has been, a disposition in the North to interfere with these interests of the South. Such interference has never been supposed to be within the power of government ; nor has it been, in any way, attempted. The slavery of the South has always been regarded as a matter of domestic policy, left with the States themselves, and with which the Federal Government had nothing to do. Certainly, sir, I am, and ever have been, of that opinion. * * * I regard domestic slavery as one of the greatest of evils, both moral and political. But though it be a malady, whether it be curable, and if so, by what means,—or, on the other hand, whether it be the *vulnus immedicabile* of the social system, I leave it to those whose right and duty it is to inquire and decide.—And this I believe, sir, is, and uniformly has been, the sentiment of the North.'—WEBSTER'S SPEECHES, p. 380.

'We know, sir, that the representation of the States in the other House is not equal.—We know that great advantage, in that respect, is enjoyed by the slave-holding States. * * Nevertheless, I do not complain : nor would I countenance any movement to alter the arrangement of representation. It is the original bargain, the compact :—let it stand, let the advantage of it be fully enjoyed. The Union itself is too full of benefits to be hazarded in propositions for changing its original basis. *I go for the Constitution as it is, and for the Union as it is.*'—IBID, p. 382.

condition of the slaves held by the South; we do not choose, or our consciences do not permit us, to abide by the terms of that compact, and we must separate unless they be changed.' We may say this; and who doubts that the hour, when the North should thus address the South, would witness the death-struggle of the Constitution? And should the Union be dissolved, and upon such a question, the North and the South would then be hostile nations; our advice would thenceforth be repelled by the people of the South, as the interested counsel of public enemies; our professions of philanthropy and appeals to conscience would be treated by them with scorn as emanating from men, who had begun by polluting themselves all over with the violation of a solemn contract; our newspapers, pamphlets, reviews, addresses, books, would be excluded from their borders as contraband goods, or rather as noxious things infected with pestilence and death;—and when this lamentable state of things should have arrived, where, unless in a war of invasion, would then be our power to better the condition, or promote the emancipation, of the slave-inhabitants of the South?

Secondly, as to the feelings of the South. Let it be remembered that the task, for us to perform in this matter, is persuasion,—the conversion of rational beings to our faith and opinion. And how, in any circumstances, do we begin the work of persuasion? Is it by obloquy, outrage, and insult? Is it by addressing to the friend, whose judgment we would affect, such personal indignities, as no gentleman could tranquilly submit to for a moment? We may revile our fellow-citizens in the choicest dialect of newspaper invective; we may denounce upon them wrath and woe; but they must be more or less than men, to receive such language as the fitting means of persuasion. In these remarks, I have spoken of men in general, even as we should find them among our own peaceable and comparatively phlegmatic citizens. But who does not know that the case is a thousand times stronger in reference to the people of the South, ardent as they proverbially are, keenly alive to personal reproach, impatient of insult, and on this particular subject peculiarly sensitive, as being fully conscious of their rights, and indignant at the actual or supposed attempts of individuals at the

North to stir up their slaves to insurrection? To think of inducing them to abolish the slave-system, by such language as I allude to, and as I not seldom see or hear used for that purpose,—by language of menace, dictation, reproach, and general obloquy,—is mere infatuation.

Practically speaking, therefore, and leaving alone the decision of various abstract questions, and curious points of religious or moral doctrine, which have somewhat unseasonably been mixed up in this controversy,—setting these apart, the considerations, which I have thus briefly suggested, exhibit, as I understand it, the line of discrimination between the policy of the Colonization Society and that of the Anti-Slavery Society, touching the great question of abolition. We, who maintain the principles of the Colonization Society, ardently desire the abolition of slavery, whenever, and so soon as, it can be peaceably accomplished; and herein our anxiety falls not short of that, which actuates the members of the Anti-Slavery Society. But we aim at practical objects by practical means; and we are at a loss to understand the definite point on which our assailants would lay their hands, and to which they would apply their money,—and still more to conceive how any useful purpose whatever is to be accomplished by such means as they employ. I say our assailants, because extraordinary as the fact is, it is not the less true, that the main immediate object of the Anti-Slavery Society would appear from its publications, although not so expressed in its constitution, to be the denouncing and maligning of the Colonization Society, its founders, its members, its purposes, both in Europe and America.

Reluctant as I am to trespass upon the indulgence of the Society, I pass over lesser points of difference between the Colonization Society and the Anti-Slavery Society, to advert, in conclusion, to the effect of the spirit and publications of the latter in the free States. That their influence is extremely and entirely pernicious in the slave-holding States,—injurious to the slaves, injurious to the free blacks, injurious to the whites,—calculated to check manumission and to defer the period of the final abolition of slavery, at the same time that they engender at the South a most unfortunate

feeling of irritation, resentment, and jealousy towards the North, founded upon the mistaken idea that these publications express the public sentiment of the North,—that such, I say, is their influence in the slave-holding States, appears, as well from general observation, as from positive testimony of the most indisputable character. And their influence in the free States is only less prejudicial than at the South, for the reason that here they have less of inflammable matter on which to act.

The Anti-Slavery Society has labored to convince the free colored persons in the United States, that the whites in general, and especially the Colonization Society, are engaged in some strange conspiracy against their welfare,—a kind of second Popish Plot. Stimulated by the writings of the prominent officers of the Anti-Slavery Society,—writings which that Society has adopted as its own,—the colored inhabitants of the free States have occasionally manifested a spirit of hostility towards the whites, fatal to the harmony of the two races in its immediate effect, and in its remote effect adapted to render the condition of the free blacks doubly uncomfortable, and to discourage and counteract all philanthropic designs in their behalf. If the obtrusive interruption and disturbance, on a recent occasion, of a public meeting of the friends of colonization in the city of New York by colored persons, may be taken as any indication of the frame of mind which the publications in question have produced among them, and if the honorable and honest men, of whom there are so many, among the friends of the Anti-Slavery Society, do not set their faces against all future attempts to enkindle a contention of caste in the free States,—the consequences cannot fail to be altogether deplorable.

The Colonization Society utterly disavows any sentiment or design of ill-will towards the colored citizens of the United States. Our purposes, in respect of them, are dictated by benevolent consideration for their welfare. We may, it is true, be mistaken in the means we adopt for their intended good; all men are liable to err; but if we err in this matter, it is an error of the head, not of the heart. And for myself, I profess that the emigration from among us of all the colored inhabitants of the country would, in

my opinion, occasion a chasm in various walks of industry, which I am at a loss to see how we should supply ;—and therefore I am not prepared to admit that their removal would be for *our* interest. At the same time I cannot sympathize in any partial scheme of alleged philanthropy, which, out of anxiety for the welfare of the blacks, would totally disregard that of the whites ; I cannot desire to see my country plunged into the horrors of a servile insurrection or of civil war ; nor can I abstain from raising my voice against measures, which, in my apprehension, sap the very foundations of the Union.

But enough, on these topics of disputation. Let me revert, in the conclusion of this discourse, to that, wherein all, it would seem, of a Christian land, must agree. Preeminent, assuredly, in the catalogue of the great blessings that we enjoy,—and a blessing as yet unknown to, or repudiated by, so many millions of mankind,—is the fact that we are a Christian people. If I were asked to designate the primary cause of the extraordinary advancement of our age in all the arts of life and the principles of civil polity, I should unhesitatingly declare that it was the influence of the tenets, spirit, and religious teachings of Christianity. I speak not of this now as a matter of faith simply ; but in reference, also, to worldly considerations.

Cast your eyes upon the favored climes of central and further Asia, the cradle of the human family, where thousands of years ago the lights of learning first beamed out upon man, and the charms of civilization gladdened his sight, to be gradually communicated from thence to the younger races of Europe. Wherefore is it that the onward steps of their intellectual improvement were prematurely arrested in the march, and the vital principles of refinement abruptly extinguished among them,—like the animated beings of mythology changed by supernatural power into stone, or the living body congealed in the instant by the rigors of an arctic sky ? Wherefore is it that the reflux tide of civilization, originally poured from the East upon the West, is now flowing back again with its accumulated volume of science and truth upon the primeval tutors of the world's unlettered infancy ? Wherefore, but because a dark and fearful superstition has woven the adamantine

chains of spiritual thralldom around the soul of the miserable Parsee or Hindoo, while the heaven-taught faith of the Christian has imparted new wings to the intellect of its proselyte, and enabled him to soar upward, in the confidence of his enlightened knowledge of truth, into the highest regions of divine philosophy?

Looking thus to the effect of Christianity upon the human intellect and the social condition of man, I see that through this the social principle acquired that elasticity of spring, which pushes along the perpetual movement of melioration in everything appertaining to human affairs. By this it is that the blessings of civilization, like the gradually enlarging circles on the surface of smooth water struck by the fall of a projected body, are made to spread and spread from their European centre, until they approach the limits of the habitable globe, and proceed to embrace in their ample scope all the Sundered families of man. For in respect of the political advantages of Christianity, it is not the sincerity of conviction, which distinguishes it from the delusion of the Buddhist or the Brahmin; since the pagan hugs his debasing superstitions to his bosom with all the eager fondness of a better faith. It is the capacity of Christianity to elevate and enlarge the soul, to extend the sphere of its charities, to exalt the condition and purify the character of the female sex, to disseminate the peaceful gifts of moral greatness from man to man, and from nation to nation, by a native dignity and energy of principle,—it is this which has contributed so wonderfully to the diffusion of modern civilization.

The Mahometan has, it is true, in past times, advanced the standard of his faith from region to region, but it was only as the banner of conquest and the stimulus to victory, that it waved above his barbaric hosts; and the lands where he made them to encamp, those gardens of the ancient world, Greece, Asia Minor, Egypt, were changed by his withering presence into the chosen abodes of ignorance, wretchedness, and barbarism. For the brilliancy of the caliphs of Bagdad was but a transient gleam of sunshine; and it was only in contact and collision with European Christians, that the Arabs of Spain acquired a more durable fame.

When has an Oriental sage appeared in modern Europe to instruct her children or inform her philosophers? When has an

Asiatic, deeply as he may suppose he feels the importance of his peculiar dogmas, travelled to the kingdoms of Christendom on a mission of religious persuasion, and sought to bring his faith in competition with ours, in order that the true one might prevail by the peaceful victories of reason? When has a Brahmin established himself among us, in the land of strangers, with a train of learned associates and a printing press,—I do not say to communicate to us the knowledge of the worldly science, which he may pretend is concealed in their sacred volumes, but to translate literally his sacred books into our vernacular tongue, and then to say to us,—‘Read, judge, be convinced, abandon the religion you profess, and embrace instead of it the better doctrine, with which I would enlighten your darkened sense?’ Never,—no, never. These are the distinguishing triumphs of Christianity, and these are the means by which the nations of Christendom have propagated from shore to shore, not only those religious tenets which are to secure eternal salvation, but those refined principles of social improvement, which, in the luminous track of the Cross, have passed on to America, to be returned back again to Asia and to Africa.

If, then, Christianity be a religion of *propagandism*,—and I dispute not that it is, nay I glory in this its noble quality, since it is the propagation of religion and of social refinement, hand in hand, which signalises its career,—if, I say, it be such, is not ours a plain and visible path of duty?

I thank God that he has made us a powerful and a prosperous people; that he has given us extended territory, and extraordinary natural resources, and all the elements of lasting elevation; that he has richly endowed us with industry, enterprise, education, religion; that to all the means, physical and moral, of acquiring wealth and grandeur as a nation, he has added the disposition to minister to the wants of our fellow-men. And I thank God for all this, not in the spirit of boastfulness or pride, but because, in so doing, he has chosen us to be the almoners of his bounty, that of our abundance we should dispense to the millions, who have not yet entertained his word, and who are still groaning in the bitterness of bondage.

and ignorance, destitute of the blessings of civilization which we possess, waiting for the messenger of truth to descend and prepare the waters of life, that they also may approach, and enter, and be saved. Be it our glorious mission to carry the Cross from nation to nation, rallying their tribes, not to the flaming sign of war, but to the bright symbol of peace,—that as Christ, and the Apostles, and holy martyrs, bore it in the olden time from Judæa over the Greek and Roman world, and thus transmitted it through our fathers to us, so also we, emulous of the divine example set us, may take up the sacred emblem, and bear it into the yet benighted regions of Africa.
